

Coastal Regeneration Co-operation Project

Feasibility study - Draft

Background:

The Leader Co-operation fund has been established to enable LAGs to combine their expertise and funding to develop mutually beneficial projects within their communities to their economic , cultural and or social benefit.

Waterford Leader Partnership has entered into agreement with Mid and East Antrim LAG, Ards and North Down Rural Partnership and Causeway Coast And Glens LAG to undertake a feasibility study to determine if suitable projects could be identified in their communities, piloting a maritime hub concept, to contribute to coastal regeneration.

Coastal Regeneration

The proposed joint activity considered how coastal communities can utilise their natural resources to generate economic activity such as existing coastal driving routes which could act as a magnet for visitors to navigate the counties maritime resources thereby generating economic and social benefits to the wider geographical area. It also considered how settlements can be developed as maritime hubs, reflecting their relationship with the sea and the activities that can be exploited in that regard. The e cooperation sought to identify the potential of the coastal towns /villages to become compelling attractive centres of activity on the coastal routes and encourage/enable stopping off, stays, diversion and increased expenditure by visitors.

Over all purpose

The aim of the project is to examine and pilot best practise in coastal regeneration with particular regard to :

- improving coastal facilities;
- Piloting the maritime hub concept, where specific communities/operators have a focus on developing activities and economic activities with a coastal /maritime focus;
- Exploring and developing new market opportunities;
- Promoting effective transnational linkages in work areas of mutual benefit
- Achieving growth, including job, through innovation.

Process

- Audit of the partner coastal areas and settlements in terms of facilities and background statistics
- Identification of two suitable towns/villages for inclusion in the scheme
- Identification of two coastal regeneration projects in each partner area, outlining the need, demand and potential project outcomes.
- Consultation with a range of communities, social enterprises and businesses.
- Visits by potential participants to like minded communities to consider best practise options and establish linkages.
- Identify commonalities that may be exploited
- Report identifying specific requirements of Waterford LAG with respect to progressing to full application.

Maritime hub concept:

The partners agreed on the following definition of a maritime hub for the purpose of this study.

A maritime hub is one where communities have a focus on developing activities which can be economic, tourism, cultural and social with a coastal/maritime focus.

It could be the aim of the activity to identify a building or space which would be a focus for maritime themed activities, events or businesses.

It could also be training, cultural or social activities that have a maritime theme. It could also utilise branded coastal routes in an area as a theme.

It could also involve working with a range of communities, social enterprises and or rural businesses to help economic regeneration.

This project is not prescriptive and indeed communities can have differing focuses (this can enable testing different approaches)

Ideally economic advantage to the area participating will result..

Alignment of the proposed investments with County Waterford Local Development Strategy and the Local Economic Community Plan

The projects identified in this feasibility study have been considered in the context of the County Waterford Local Development Strategy, Waterford City and County Local Economic And Community Plan and the Failte Ireland perspective. The commitment of the Waterford Local Action Group to this study is confirmed in the minutes of their meeting of July 20th. 2017

County Waterford Local Development Strategy 2015

The LDS strategic framework section 4.1.2; Economic Actions, identifies "Development of tourism as a key driver of rural Economic Development and job creation. This will involve both private and community based organisations focused job creation. This will ... be factored into LEADER investment plans. The first two actions identified under this heading are:

The continued support for the development of strategically placed Activity Centres, and activity tourism projects subject to rules of displacement.

The development of maritime tourism, Yacht chartering, Onshore facilities, Sea Kayaking,. Provision of infrastructure.

Waterford City and County LECP 2015-2020

The Waterford City and County Council LECP 2015-2020 focuses on the potential contribution of tourism and natural resources in its statements and objectives under Goals 4 and 5 to achieve the outcome of a 'vibrant and sustainable local economy'.

Goal 4. Accelerate the growth of the tourism economy Tourism has the potential to become a key driver of economic growth and job creation across Waterford and the South East. Tourism provides jobs in rural and urban areas and is populated by many Irish owned SMEs. Tourism also offers positive spill over into other aspects of the economy and society such as quality of life improvements for permanent residents and increasing the attractiveness of Waterford and the region for inward investment.

Objective:

- 4.1 Strengthen the tourism brand
- 4.2 Develop a world class tourism product
- 4.4 Enhance the visitor experience

Goal 5. Expand the contribution of the natural resources sector Waterford's extraordinary environment, maritime and marine resources underpin our quality of life and are also fundamental drivers of the local economy. In Waterford, agri food is already a key contributor to the economy and Waterford is home to a number of large scale food producers and a growing number of artisan food producers including a burgeoning craft brewing industry. Aquaculture and seafood processing SMEs have significant potential for job creation on Waterford's coast. The key to achieving the potential of these sectors will be a transition to a knowledge based high value added sector which will increase productivity and competitiveness across both established and emerging sectors.

Objective:

- 5.2 Seek to realise value from our unique marine environment and drive forward the maritime economy while preserving the favourable environmental and ecological conservation status of the coast

From Land to Sea - building on a variety of initiatives

From a coastal and marine perspective, this focus on the consumer is particularly important in understanding just how visitors wish to access and engage with our coastline. There is sometimes an assumption that tourism in marine areas is simply sailing and cruising. Yet, for the majority of visitors, access to the coastline is actually from the land and, therefore, a range of both sea-to-land, but perhaps more importantly, land-to-sea solutions and opportunities must be provided. This can range across water-based activities such as surfing, sailing, kayaking and wildlife watching to coast-based walks, attractions and services. **Faile Ireland**

Overview of the resources of Coastal Waterford:

Waterford County has 100Km of coastline (Waterford Bridge to Youghal Bridge) and currently has **4 Blue Flag beaches:** Tramore, Clonea, Dunmore Strand, Dunmore Counsellors Strand

8 Green Coast designated beaches: Annestown, Guillamene, Newtown Cove, Ballyquin, Curragh, Kilfarrassey, Goat Island .

2 Marinas; Waterford City marina ,Dungarvan marina

1 UNESCO Geopark ; Copper Coast Geopark.

5 Coastal SPAs: Tramore Back Strand, Mid Waterford Coast, Dungarvan Harbour, Helvick Head to Ballyquin, Blackwater estuary.

11 Coastal towns and villages : Cheek Point, Passage East, Dunmore East, Tramore, Annestown, Bunmahon, Stradbally, Dungarvan, Ring, Helvic and Ardmore.

3 Ports/Harbours : Waterford , Dunmore East and Dungarvan.

6 Smaller piers and harbours: Cheekpoint, Passage, Tramore, Dunbritten, Ballinagoul and Ardmore.

Tourism spend 2015 :- €52MM, ave. €204 per head.

Resources/Activities in coastal towns:

Waterford: pop. 53,504; Marina, Boardwalk, community parks and playgrounds, parking, food, hotels, train, busses, hotels, train, bus, motorway access. Waterford city is excluded from the Leader programme.

Cheekpoint: pop. 318; Pier, car parking, footpath river walk, Rural Link transport to Waterford and Tramore on Fridays

Passage East: pop. 542; Ferry point, quay, fishing, car parking, Community centre, Playground.

Dunmore East : pop. 1,808; Commercial fishing harbour, Waterford Harbour Sailing Club, Dunmore East Scouts, Fisherman's Hall community Centre, Public Park, Beaches and coves within village, Hotels, Restaurants. Bus Service to Waterford City. Commercial Adventure Centre. Harbour buildings not in full use.

Tramore: pop. 10,831, Extensive sea front and sand dune walks Small harbour away from town centre used for inshore fishing. Hotels, Multiple sea access locations for swimming, surf boarding, canoeing etc. Surf school and ancillary facilities. Life Guard station. Bus service to Waterford.

Annestown: pop. <200; Beach, Car parking, on Copper Coast Geopark. Soccer club & facilities, No maritime related infrastructure, low density population

Bunmahon: pop. <200; Beach, Caravan Park, UNESCO Geopark Visitor Centre, surf school. Rural Link bus service 3 days per week.

Stradbally: pop. 438; Cove, beach

Dungarvan: pop. 9,227; Dungarvan Harbour Sailing Club (limited access hours), Marina, parking, food, Museum, Castle, hotels

Ring: pop. 499; Beach, Ballinagoul pier, Gaeltacht, Once weekly Rural Link transport to Dungarvan and Ardmore

Helvick: pop. <200; Fishing Harbour, Seaweed baths, Combined community committee/resource with Ring

Ardmore: pop. 434; St. Declan's way, Ecclesiastical ruins, hotels, food, Cliff walk, harbour with limited access/water depth. Commercial Ardmore Adventures tourism business, Rural Link transport on Tuesdays to Ring and Dungarvan.

Consultation with Co-operating LAGs:

Waterford Leader Partnership and Mid and East Antrim held a series of scoping meetings in 2016 and 2017. This resulted in identification of potential partner Lags and subsequently agreement by Ards and North Down and Causeway Coast and Glens LAGs to join the partnership.

Waterford Leader Partnership led a delegation from County Waterford LAG, comprising representatives of the Board of Waterford Leader Partnership CLG, the Board of Dungarvan Harbour Sailing Club, the Leader of Dunmore East Sea Scouts and the Board of Comhlucht Forbartha na nDéise to the partner LAGs in Northern Ireland. The meetings were coordinated and facilitated by Mid And East Antrim LAG led by sub committee chair Mr. Sam Crowe and Mr. A. Best of M&EA.

Mr. N. Mcfadden of Causeway, Coast and Glen's LAG and Ms M. Osborne of Ards and North Down LAG. participated on behalf of their action groups. The partnership visited community projects with Coastal regeneration potential at Carnlough, Whitehead, Ganaway Activity Centre and Portaferry (Portaferry Community Services, Portaferry Sailing Club and Portaferry Regeneration Ltd.)

The projects visited demonstrated the positive impact of improving quality and access to facilities (sailing clubs), promotion of coastal activities (sea rowing competitions) and cooperation between centres (skills transfer/boat building, open days etc.) on the local communities and economies.

Consultation within Waterford LAG:

Waterford Leader Partnership CLG. have an ongoing consultation process in place aligned with the creation of the LDS and regular public information sessions relating to LAG funding rounds. Four potential towns /villages were identified as having the potential to participate in this activity. Passage East, Dunmore East, Dungarvan and Ring/Helbhic. Passage East and Ring/Helbhic indicated that they did not have development projects aligned with the cooperation projects objectives and therefore did not take further part in the process.

Project officer consulted with South East FLAG office as to the potential of Cooperation funding to support development activities in coastal communities of the South East, specifically Co. Waterford. While no specific coastal regeneration project was sign posted, Dunmore East and Dungarvan were identified as the towns with the scale (pop.>1,000)most likely able to participate in Cooperation funded projects.

Project officer met with D.Tiernan , Passage East to appraise him of cooperation fund, partner lags and its potential with respect to Dunmore East development. D. Tiernan shared this information with Development committee chair who advised that their focus at this time is on community hall development. They did not presently have the capacity to engage with a cooperation project.

Project officer also met with the chairperson, board member and the manager at Comhlucht Forbartha na Deise where he again outlined the rationale and scope of the Co-operation project. The meeting reviewed how various strategic community development plans might fit with Cooperation funding and concluded that their is not currently a match.

Project officer met with the Commodore of Waterford Harbour Sailing Club and outlined the ambitions of the proposed cooperation fund. During the course of a wide ranging discussion, where potential areas of future interaction between WHSC and WLP Clg. , no potential to participate in a cooperation project at this time was identified.

Project officer met with the Chairperson of the Dunmore East Community Fisherman 's hall development. Following discussion of possible participation in Cooperation project a second meeting was set up and the Dungarvan Scouts were invited to attend. The Dungarvan Scout's project is to locate to a permanent base within the harbour and build sea rowing into their activities as a unique attraction to visiting scout troops.

Project officer met with the Commodore and officer board of Dungarvan Harbour Sailing Club. The club put forward for consideration a coastal regeneration project which would be driven by 24*7 access to shore side facilities for maritime visitors. The club are also interested to evaluate the interest in coastal rowing by way of open day /show event. The project would have an economic and environmental impact as discussed below.

Conclusion:

Dunmore East and Dungarvan have a number of common characteristics which would identify them as suitable locations for pilot scheme coastal regeneration efforts.

They each have a sheltered harbour with significant capacity for visiting boats. They each have good land access by road and are serviced by public transport. They are in the catchment area of the Waterford Greenway which is attracting significant visitors with an interest in outdoor recreation, environment and cultural history. Basic structures by way of tourism infrastructure are in place (hotels, restaurants, holiday homes, etc.)

Sea rowing is a well developed international sport. The Irish Coastal Rowing Federation has 10 clubs in Cork & Kerry, 13 on the East Coast, 2 in County Donegal and affiliated members in County Antrim and County Down. The 2014 national championships were held in Carnlough, Co. Antrim.

Two promoters, one each in Dunmore East and Dungarvan have participated in cooperation visits with partner LAGs

Project One :

Promoter: Dunmore East Scouts

Dunmore East Scouts have four sections with a total membership of 80 youth members, 15 leaders and a waiting list of 70. Currently the troop have capacity to meet one night per week using the facilities of the village hall and the RNLI station. The troop is active in community projects such as Tidy towns and the parks and woods committee. It is the ambition of the troop to host education programmes to pass on historic fishing skills to new generations. Dungarvan Sea Scouts have the potential to partner with community and commercial operations in the Dunmore harbour area to drive economic activity. Packages could be developed for visiting scout troops incorporating sea rowing (Dunmore East scouts), sail training (Waterford Harbour Sailing club) and out door adventure activities (Dunmore Adventure). They propose to invest in a permanent Scout hall and rowing boat kits to achieve this ambition. This project would draw on the knowledge of each of the partner Lags in executing this plan.

Estimated investment (subject to procurement process):

Scout hall	€95,000
Boat kits and trailer	€30,000
Travel and cooperation	€7,000

Project Two:

Promoter: Dungarvan harbour Sailing Club

Dungarvan Harbour Sailing Club currently offers support to local community sailors, and visitors on an ad hoc basis. Club house facilities are available for a limited number of hours during peak season and by prior appointment otherwise. It is their proposal to modify their facility offering such that facilities such as showers, temporary storage etc, are accessible on a 24*7 basis by way of electronically controlled entry. Building modifications are required to enable this. Cruising boats which can only access the harbour at high tides will therefore have facilities available and will make increasing use of Dungarvan harbour. The availability of 24*7 facilities will also make Dungarvan harbour a more attractive home port for boats currently moored elsewhere. Access to shore based facilities will also reduce the discharge of waste/grey water into the estuary. The installation of solar

powered water heating will make a further positive environmental contribution. Shore based businesses will also benefit from the additional footfall.

Dungarvan harbour Sailing Club will also host sea rowing teams from partner lags to evaluate the level of interest and possible future potential of sea rowing in or associated with Dungarvan harbour. Improved access to the sailing clubs facilities will also encourage wider participation in coastal/water based activities. The operator will draw on the experience of Whitehead Sailing club and support or other LAGs in staging this event/evaluation.

Estimated investment(subject to procurement process)

Building modifications : €75,000

Travel and cooperation €7,000

Open day €10,000

(subject to confirmation through procurement process)

1. Gig x4 man Rowing Boats supplied in kit form for final completion & Associated Equipment

- Cost Price Each Kit Boat = £5,016
- Lightweight Oars = £1,300
- 5 x Adult Lifejackets = £250
- 5 x Junior Lifejackets = £250

Total Each Boat = £7,000

Total for 3 Boats = £20,448

2. Road Trailer

- Road Trailer to Rack Boats = £3,500

Total Cost for Road Trailer = £3,500

